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Security Council

Sixtieth year

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5110th meeting

Wednesday, 12 January 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Bielsa	(Argentina)
Members:	Algeria	Ms. Baaziz
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Wu Zhiwu
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Haneda
	Philippines	Mr. Cato
	Romania	Mr. Dumitru
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Mrs. Patterson

Agenda

The question of Haiti

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05-20631 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of El Salvador, in which she requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Gallardo (El Salvador), took the seat reserved for her at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the usual practice, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund.

It is so decided.

I invite Ms. Bellamy to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Bellamy: Let me begin by thanking the Argentinean presidency for giving us the opportunity to address the Security Council in its open debate on Haiti.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is pleased to note the continued interest of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in the human development dimensions of building peace and security in Haiti. We have, through our team on the ground, seen many examples of personal engagement by the contributing troops to the well-being of children, whether in Gonaïves or elsewhere in the country.

I would also take this opportunity to acknowledge the important leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Juan Gabriel Valdés.

Today, I have been invited to contribute our perspective on the situation of Haitian children, who, as this Council may be aware, represent close to one out of every two Haitians. In Haiti, one child under five dies each hour. Every day, a mother dies giving birth. Four children out of 10 do not go to school. One child out of four suffers from chronic malnutrition, his or her growth stunted forever. How can we guarantee Haitian children their childhood? How can we build peace and security and the future of that country without ensuring the survival of its children?

The present peace process in Haiti is the third in a period of 15 years. Imagine if we had invested much more in Haitian children 15 years ago. Let us get it right this time around and recognize that investment in children is the best foundation to build a strong and peaceful nation.

Haiti has never had universal and free education, a fundamental factor for peacebuilding, for reconciliation and for long-term sustainable development. Education not only protects children, it builds and gives them a sense of purpose and of a more positive future. It helps them to become responsible citizens who can contribute to the development of Haiti. Simply, it takes them out of the negative vicious circle of poverty and violence. It gives them hope.

I do, however, have good news. Under the auspices of the Transitional Government, education is becoming a more dynamic sector in Haiti, actively supported by the donor community. Equally encouraging, the private education sector, which represents about 85 per cent of the total, is now more integrated into the national education system.

A truly global, integrated approach also requires essentials such as immunization, access to clean water and decent sanitation, good nutrition, care and protection from abuse. Children who have lived through what no child should ever have to live through need psychosocial affective support. Together with many partners in the United Nations and externally, we are strongly supporting actions in those areas.

Traditional donors, international financial institutions, as well as countries in the region are responding to the commitments they made about six months ago in Washington, D.C. In our view, after the difficult year 2004, Haiti is now at a turning point. There are good signs of progress, but children still face major challenges. For example, we are increasingly concerned by the thousands of children in Haiti living today on the streets, often serving as domestic helpers in slavery-like conditions, being trafficked or experiencing other forms of exploitation. Many have been drawn into gangs, their childhood literally stolen.

It is incumbent on all of us — adults, decision-makers and leaders — to help break the cycle of violence in Haiti and better to prevent and protect children from abuse. So I would like to make a special appeal to the Council and to MINUSTAH. In slum areas like Cité Soleil and very poor urban areas — for example, around Gonaïves — children are held hostage under the brutal and criminal rule of local gangs. Today, the children in those places are denied their very basic human rights. My plea to the Council is to help them. I urge the Mission to keep on securing urban areas such as Cité Soleil to guarantee a degree of normal life and to allow the Haitian institutions, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to work unhindered.

Finally, UNICEF appeals to every actor to redouble its support for Haitian children. All of us share in the responsibility for relieving their suffering. Investing now in the survival, education and protection of children is indeed investing in the future of Haiti.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to welcome you, Sir, as you preside over the Council. We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Valdés for his very substantive briefing on developments in the settlement of the situation in Haiti and the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We welcome the efforts and overall work of the Mission he heads in the implementation of its important mandate.

Russia has consistently supported the efforts of the Transitional Government of Haiti to end the violence perpetrated by illegal armed gangs. We believe that a comprehensive and effective solution to that problem will be promoted by the prompt establishment of the national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

We welcome MINUSTAH's efforts to assist the Transitional Government in restoring law and order and in launching a comprehensive national dialogue and a process of national reconciliation open to all political forces in Haiti. It is important further to pursue work in those areas.

The Haitian authorities, working with MINUSTAH and the Organization of American States, must immediately undertake all necessary measures to prepare for the holding in 2005 of free and fair elections. We welcome the fact that work in that area is under way, and it must be continued.

The restoration of legality must be pursued in that country with due respect for the rule of law. We call on all Haitian parties strictly to respect human rights and to refrain from violence as a means of achieving their political ends. We note the steps taken by the Transitional Government to release unjustifiably detained persons. We anticipate the prompt release of all who have not been charged and expect that those who are genuinely guilty of breaking the law will be brought to justice.

It is important to develop long-term and coordinated economic, financial and technical assistance for Haiti, to be provided by the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, international financial institutions, regional organizations and donor countries. A clear priority in that regard is the speedy disbursement to Haiti of funds pledged at the international donors' conference held in July 2004.

We anticipate that the deployment of MINUSTAH's military and police contingents will be sped up, so as to bring their numbers up to the strength authorized by the Security Council. I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Council of Russia's decision to provide MINUSTAH with a team of civilian police officers.

The challenge for both the people of Haiti and the international community is to take into account the lessons of the past and prevent a resurgence of inst ility in Haiti that would negate the many years of what, frankly, has been a costly joint effort to normalize life in that country.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): Allow me to formally congratulate Argentina on becoming a member of the Security Council and on assuming the presidency of the Council. We are honoured to have you, Sir, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Argentina, chairing the meeting today, which is a clear sign of the importance your country attaches to finding a peaceful and durable solution to the situation in Haiti. I also wish to thank Ambassador Valdés for his comprehensive briefing. Denmark fully supports his work as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). My Government urges all parties involved — at the national, regional and international

levels — to support the work of the United Nations in Haiti.

Denmark also fully associates itself with the statement that the Ambassador of Luxembourg will deliver shortly on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Mr. President, a secure environment is a precondition for a viable political process and for long-term development in Haiti. Recurring incidents of violence remind us of the urgent need to stabilize the still-volatile security situation. In that context, we urge all Haitians to refrain from using any kind of violence to achieve their political goals.

Denmark welcomes the recent deployment of additional military and civilian police units to MINUSTAH. We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the many troop contributors. We are encouraged by the reported improvement of the security situation at the end of 2004, and would like to see further action by MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police to stabilize the situation in all parts of the country. In that connection, my Government would like to underscore the importance of demonstrating respect for all human rights.

The ongoing high level of violence underlines the urgent need for the effective removal of all illegal weapons from the streets of Haiti. With the assistance of MINUSTAH, the Transitional Government should initiate a comprehensive and community-based disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process. In that respect, Denmark urges the Government to establish without delay a national commission on DDR.

A national reconciliation process is very much needed. Although the United Nations and regional partners can play an important supportive role in such a process, the initiative must come from within Haitian society itself, and it must be based on the broadest possible national political dialogue.

The Transitional Government should take the lead in the national reconciliation process. We therefore call on the Transitional Government to continue to explore avenues for the creation of an all-inclusive political process that encourages all segments of Haitian society to participate. That process should be initiated before the upcoming elections later this year.

Only 10 months from now, local, parliamentary and presidential elections will take place in Haiti. We welcome the agreement signed recently between MINUSTAH, the Transitional Government, the United Nations Development Programme and the Provisional Electoral Council on the organization of the elections. Denmark urges all parties involved to continue to make all the necessary preparations to ensure truly free and fair elections that will ultimately lead to the handing over of power to an elected Government.

Poverty, extreme inequality and public corruption have fuelled authoritarian rule and violence for decades. The Haitian people longs for sustained and equitable economic and social development. There is a clear need for both long-term development programmes and quick-impact projects. Substantial funds were pledged at the international donors' conference on Haiti last summer, where the EU emerged as the largest donor. Regrettably, only little of the aid pledged at the conference has been disbursed so far. My Government urges financial institutions, international organizations and donor countries to accelerate the disbursement of pledged funds. In that regard, we welcome the recent release of resources by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Part of the problem stems from administrative bottlenecks in Haiti itself. The lack of administrative capacity and resources within the Transitional Government and State institutions is hindering the proper preparation and implementation of development projects. Donors should therefore pay special attention to the urgent need for capacity building within the Transitional Government, as a prerequisite for effective development cooperation.

For the Haitian people, last year was supposed to be a year of celebration marking the bicentenary of its victory over slavery and colonization. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Instead Haitians found themselves in the midst of the kind of violent political unrest that has dominated Haiti for too long. It is vital that, this time, the international community delivers on its promises and helps the Haitian people to establish the foundation for a secure environment and economic and social development based on democratic principles, the rule of law, good governance and respect for all human rights. The Haitian people needs, deserves and expects that to happen.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Denmark for her kind words addressed to my country.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): We would like to thank you, Mr. President, and to congratulate you for your timely initiative to hold a debate on the situation in Haiti. I am also pleased to welcome the presence of Ambassador Valdés, to whom I am particularly grateful for having briefed us on the situation in Haiti. I also wish to take this opportunity to tell Ambassador Valdés how much we appreciate his work on the ground.

The briefing made by Ambassador Valdés clearly illustrated that Haiti is facing several major challenges: achieving success in the political transition process that has been taking place for a year now, improving the security situation, re-launching the Haitian economy in the short- and medium-term and promoting sustainable development.

The political crisis that has rocked Haiti has deep roots in Haitian society. It is important that Haitians and the international community face the obvious, namely, that peace in Haiti will only be sustainable if it is based on a national consensus forged through the participation of all of the country's inhabitants.

From this perspective, it is important that, as they adopt positions and take action, the Transitional Government and the various institutions that are in place work, on a daily basis to promote the creation of an environment that inspires unity and restores the confidence of all those who fear for their future because of their political sympathies or affiliations. They will need to work tirelessly to bring about national reconciliation and inclusiveness wherever possible.

In several months' time, the country will hold legislative and presidential elections — the final milestone on its journey towards a definitive return to the great family of the world's democracies. Given the recent history of the country, we again urge the Haitian political class to make the political concessions necessary to facilitate the establishment of institutions that will promote the return of peace and stability in the country after the elections. The Transitional Government should spare no effort to integrate within the political arena all Haitian parties, as long as they reject violence.

The second major challenge is to improve the security situation, which continues to be of great concern because of the abuses being carried out by the armed groups that hold sway in poor areas and markets. The international community must work to ensure the better protection of human rights and citizens' rights in Haiti.

Now that MINUSTAH has sufficient strength to be fully operational, it needs to address the problem of the lack of security with due resolve. We welcome its recent success in this area. We believe that, in accordance with its mandate, MINUSTAH can play an active role in assisting the Transitional Government to pursue the necessary major reforms being undertaken in the area of security. From this perspective, the rebuilding of the Haitian police and the army of the republic are of paramount importance.

MINUSTAH now needs to increase its efforts, working in an energetic and vigorous fashion with the Haitian National Police, with a view to discouraging, once and for all, the illegal armed gangs that continue to prefer the language of arms to that of dialogue in pursuing their demands.

In analysing sources of violence in Haiti, it is clear to us that political violence and criminal violence fuel each other. In order to eliminate such violence, we must urgently establish an integrated, comprehensive programme of disarmament, demobilization and social reintegration, which must take into account the problems of the country.

In this context, we must link paid disarmament and the rejection of violence with the integration of the people involved in a programme that brings together vocational reintegration with rehabilitation, through activities to promote a culture of non-violence and peace, as advocated by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). However, such an approach can provide specific results only if Haitians themselves believe in peace and work to establish it within the culture, focusing on the goals of economic recovery and social development.

The Transitional Government of Haiti must urgently step up the process of establishing a national disarmament commission and work to mobilize the resources pledged to the country during the donors conference held in Washington in July 2004, so as to fund the implementation of the programme to create 30,000 jobs in the public sector and in the area of

environmental protection. In this context, the key to success lies in support for small and medium-sized companies.

A strategic approach that is well though. out could help to ensure an effective interface between assistance for stabilization and peacekeeping on the one hand, and peacebuilding and the promotion of sustainable development on the other, by permitting immediate social change and necessary reform. That is the second major challenge facing Haiti.

In this regard, we believe that MINUSTAH must fully carry out its complex mandate so as to achieve tangible results that are consonant with the many human, financial and material investments that have been agreed to in recent months by the Transitional Government and the international community with a view to ensuring collective responsibility for the future of the country.

Prospects for the future of the country must be restored by making use of the unprecedented wave of solidarity that has been demonstrated by all the countries in the region to help in Haiti's recovery. It is also essential for Haiti to regain its place within its natural family — the Caribbean Community. We urge the States members of that body to overcome their internal differences, which are hindering unity of action with respect to that brotherly country, whose people have, for decades, been suffering as a result of poverty and political violence.

In conclusion, we welcome the establishment and the beginning of the work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti of the Economic and Social Council. The establishment of the Advisory Group is further proof of the international community's mobilization in favour of Haiti. We also welcome initiatives to promote a better contribution by the Haitian diaspora to the rebuilding of the country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I will now make a statement in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic — that sounds as though I am announcing to everyone that it is my birthday so as to receive gifts. But that is how the system works.

In my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic, it is a privilege to address the Security Council. My country feels respect and friendship towards the Haitian people. We are also grateful to Haiti. On 9 June 1956, Argentina suffered a coup d'état. Seven rebels struggling to re-establish the constitutional order, were granted asylum at the Haitian embassy in Buenos Aires. The Ambassador of Haiti at the time, Jean Brierre, saved his guests from being abducted and shot, with words that we in Argentina still remember today. He said,

> "Just because Haiti is a small country does not mean that it will allow such an abuse. Quite the contrary, small countries must be scrupulously respected because they are small — so that the rule of law remains a moral imperative, not something based on force".

My country also feels compassion for Haiti — compassion in its true meaning, which is to understand the suffering of others and to wish to share it.

More than a decade ago, the international community realized that it was necessary to help Haiti to break out of the vicious circle of poverty, authoritarianism, violence and desolation. As Argentina is presiding over the Security Council this month of January 2005, we proposed to convene an open debate on Haiti in the hope of finding realistic and lasting solutions. The Organization has established the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), headed by a talented friend of my country, Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés of Chile, whom we congratulate on his outstanding performance. MINUSTAH includes civilian and military personnel from all over the world. It is an operation in which, for the first time, many American States have decided to act together: we feel that MINUSTAH is our mission.

The regional presence in Haiti has made us a part of a search for a multifaceted solution that has a real chance of enduring. In this context, my country would like to see the creation of a number of mechanisms for cooperation. Furthermore, working within our capacities, Argentina is undertaking an analysis to determine the potential for Haiti to export its products to Argentina with a view to facilitating access to our markets.

In the area of human rights — which is one of the pillars of our foreign policy — my country supports the efforts of the Transitional Government and urges it to be extremely careful so that there are no violations of the Haitians' basic rights.

In the humanitarian field, our country has also wished to have a presence in Haiti. President Kirchner mandated the participation of White Helmets for humanitarian assistance. Solidarity is an excellent therapy for many mental states: arrogance, desperation, indifference, egomania.

In the context of rebuilding institutions, Argentina has offered technical assistance to support the Transitional Government in the tasks of organizing, supervising and holding free and fair elections as soon as possible. For the electoral process to succeed, a broad-based dialogue among all the local political forces is essential, the only condition being that they explicitly reject the use of violence. That includes leaders of the Fanmi Lavalas who have accepted the democratic process and have rejected violence.

If being in Haiti today is a moral obligation, the international community must provide the assistance needed to cooperate in the functioning of a Haitian State apparatus that can provide essential needs to the country's inhabitants. The reconstruction of the Haitian economy, together with the restoration of democratic institutions and the maintenance of a secure environment based on respect for the law, is essential.

The donor conference held in Washington represents a new source of opportunities and hope for Haiti, and we urge that it be translated into concrete action. It will be necessary to identify infrastructure projects and innovative cooperation mechanisms that will generate economic reconstruction. Donors must strive to honour their commitments.

We also hope that the programme of work formulated by the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank will be an action framework through which we, together with the authorities of Haiti, can begin to turn the situation around. For projects that still lack essential technical expertise, the region offers its most competent technicians, who can join their efforts with those already under way.

Sometimes, speaking with excessive candour can leave the audience with the feeling that the speaker has not been sincere enough. However, I have tried to express myself with candour and also with sincerity. My country renews its commitment to work for development, peaceful understanding and social justice in Haiti. I hope that this joint effort, which is the purpose of this debate, will lighten the path towards overcoming the difficulties and the injustice in Haiti, that beloved Caribbean country.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Balarezo (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I want to congratulate Argentina on the leadership it has demonstrated in the presidency of the Security Council this month and also to congratulate it on this initiative, which enables us to specifically address a most important issue, which is one of the complex crises faced by the region. I should also like to welcome the presence of Juan Gabriel Valdés, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and to thank him for his report, which has informed us in greater detail about the progress made.

As our heads of State reiterated at the Rio Group Summit last November, the stabilization, reconstruction and development of Haiti are regional priorities. That is why we welcome the strong response from countries of the region in support of Haiti, which, in the specific case of Peru, is expressed in the contribution of a military contingent to MINUSTAH.

But complex crises like the case of Haiti also highlight the new challenges to international security that confront the United Nations. Therefore, our commitment to international peace and security is regional, but it is also universal. That is why Peru participates in five peacekeeping operations in Africa and Cyprus.

For Peru, restoring the Transitional Government's control over civil order throughout the country is a basic element of stability in Haiti; nothing is more important than that aspect. However, in the case of Haiti, the insecurity arising from the persistence of illegal armed groups requires a special political and inclusive effort. We see that the consolidation of a sustainable security environment requires simultaneous action on various fronts, especially in the political, institutional and social development of the country.

We must resolutely support the reconstruction of national capacities to strengthen the rule of law and the exercise of civil rights and to help the people overcome poverty. Peru is paying particular attention to the

development and implementation of the electoral timetable planned for this year in Haiti. We also need a transparent, robust and independent judiciary. That will permit full respect for human rights and a resolute fight against impunity and corruption. Strengthening the judiciary is paramount.

The political and institutional development of Haiti is closely linked to economic and social development. Therefore, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategy that will take into account the many challenges facing the country. Peru believes there must be a firm commitment on the part of the international community to the reconstruction and development of Haiti.

Certainly, the Haitian Government has a basic responsibility to carry out the domestic efforts necessary to lay the foundations for sustained growth and poverty reduction. But the fact is that Haiti does not have the resources to address the great challenge of development on its own. Haiti requires international cooperation in terms of financial and technical assistance. Therefore, it is very important that MINUSTAH devote special attention not only to the humanitarian aspect, but also, and above all, to the dimension of long-term development. Haiti requires resolute support from the United Nations, the donor community and the international financial institutions.

In its short period of existence, MINUSTAH — thanks to the troop contributors, the Mission authorities and the Security Council — has made progress in implementing its mandate, including the civil component, security and the preparation of the forthcoming elections. But additional efforts are needed in terms of contributing military and police staff, disarmament, stabilizing the political system and rebuilding Haiti.

Therefore, we must continue to provide to MINUSTAH all the necessary means so that, at the end of its mission, we will have a successful experience. A good sign for the future would be to establish a longer mandate period when MINUSTAH's mandate is renewed. In addition — and this is a fundamental aspect — we need to ensure that the funds pledged to Haiti are disbursed.

In conclusion, we have the opportunity to create the conditions for a promising future in Haiti. And, as the Minister for Foreign Relations of Chile said, we must not fail in that effort.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Mr. Hoscheit (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for my country, Sir, that I am speaking in this forum for the first time during this semester under your presidency and on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein align themselves with this statement.

The European Union welcomes this opportunity to address the situation in Haiti and notes that the presence here of several high-ranking political personalities underlines the importance of today's debate. The European Union welcomes also the report by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, as well as the unanimous decision taken by the Security Council on 29 November 2004 to extend the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) until June 2005, with the intention of extending it for further periods.

The European Union notes that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti is nearly up to its full authorized strength and that this has increased its ability to use a more robust approach in implementing its mandate, in particular when it comes to conducting joint operations with the Haitian National Police against illegal armed groups.

The European Union welcomes the recent positive developments on the ground but notes that further action is required to improve the overall security situation in the country, which remains of concern. In some areas, the lack of security is still an impediment to effective humanitarian assistance and project implementation.

The European Union urges all parties without exception to refrain from any kind of violent behaviour that would further imperil the welfare of the Haitian people, to abide by the rule of law and to respect human rights. We call on the Transitional Government to take the necessary measures to put an end to impunity.

We strongly believe that the ongoing crisis in Haiti can be resolved only by peaceful means, through a constitutional and inclusive political process of national dialogue, compromise and reconciliation, leading to free and fair elections by the end of this year and to the transfer of power to elected authorities. We strongly encourage the Transitional Government to pursue its efforts in this regard, with the assistance of the United Nations Stabilization Mission. In that context, it is important that all political forces publicly renounce violence and join the democratic and electoral process.

The European Union strongly supports the adjustments proposed by the Secretary-General in November 2004 with regard to the structure of MINUSTAH, in particular adding a formed police unit to provide enhanced operational support to the Haitian National Police; implementing quick-impact projects that will directly improve the lives of the Haitian people; and increasing MINUSTAH's capacity to implement projects in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into the community.

In that context, the European Union encourages the Transitional Government of Haiti, assisted by MINUSTAH, to redouble, as a matter of highest priority, its current efforts aimed at removing all illegal weapons from the streets and fully to disarm all armed groups, in order not to jeopardize the democratic transition process under way.

With 271 million euros' worth of pledges, the European Union has emerged as the largest single donor from the pledging conference on Haiti held in Washington in July 2004. Those pledges do not include contributions from individual EU member States. The European Union will make every effort to reduce bottlenecks and to disburse those funds promptly, with a view to creating employment and achieving quick and visible changes. A total of 45 million euros has recently been approved for infrastructure projects, and 27 million euros for rehabilitation projects. To promote the rule of law, the European Union, together with Canada, has furthermore launched an important project aimed at reforming the judiciary system.

The European Union is also providing substantial financial support for the organization of elections. Haiti is also on the European Union's priority list for electoral observation for the local, parliamentarian and presidential elections, scheduled to take place in November and December 2005. An exploratory mission is scheduled to be dispatched in June to assess the feasibility of a European Union election observation mission to Haiti.

The European Union fully supports the efforts by the countries of the region, as well as those undertaken by regional groups such as the Organization of American States. We believe that the United Nations should be present in Haiti for as long as necessary, with a view to encouraging international support for the sustainable political, social, economic and ecological development of the country. In that context, we support the activities of the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

The European Union, for its part, remains committed to supporting the ongoing political process and to playing its role in providing further help to alleviate the Haitian people's suffering by means of prompt humanitarian aid and continued long-term assistance, with a view to contributing to lasting peace and stability in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Guatemala, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Briz Gutiérrez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to welcome your presence and to congratulate your country for having begun its term of office as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in the exercise of the presidency, and for having taken, in this first month of the new year, the initiative of convening an open meeting to discuss the situation in Haiti. Guatemala wishes you every success.

We would like also to express our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, for his comprehensive presentation on recent developments, and for the work he has been doing as head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Since the very beginning of the Haitian crisis, my country has expressed its solidarity with the people and the authorities of that country. Our Government has also publicly expressed its sincere wish that all political sectors in Haiti find a way of preserving democracy and of creating a favourable environment that will help ensure the sustainable development of the country. We know that this objective can be

accomplished only if the international community promotes a cooperative long-term effort that is not only generous in nature and well coordinated but also goes beyond merely putting an end to violence and confrontation.

The security situation in the country, the weakness of the judiciary and the ongoing problem of impunity are but a few of the major obstacles that the Haitian people face. That is why Guatemala deems it important that the international community and relevant regional organizations continue to support Haiti in the promotion and protection of fundamental rights, particularly of women and children, assisting in the investigation of abuses and seeking to end impunity through the reform and strengthening of institutions charged with the administration of justice. As we know from firsthand experience, that is not an easy task.

We also appeal to the Transitional Government to take concrete measures to prevent such abuses through the effective investigation of reported cases and the prosecution of those responsible. We reiterate the need to follow procedures that have proved to be fair and effective and that are consistent with international norms and the corresponding right of all to due process — in particular the right to be heard by a competent, independent and impartial court without discrimination of any kind.

The delegation of Guatemala believes that another fundamental problem is the extreme poverty prevailing in the country as well as the high rate of illiteracy and malnutrition that continue to deprive the Haitian people of their basic economic, social and cultural rights. That in turn aggravates the consequences of the lack of observance of their basic civil and political rights.

We are aware of the fact that this represents a tremendous challenge to the Transitional Government. We urge it, in collaboration with all sectors of society and the support of the international community, to design and implement the development plan that will enable it to meet the fundamental economic and social needs of every Haitian citizen.

It is also important to take into account at all times the country's vulnerability to natural disasters, as we saw with tropical storm Jeanne, which struck the country a few months ago.

Accordingly, we believe that the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti set up by the Economic and Social Council and reactivated by a decision adopted on 15 November 2004 is a mechanism that has contributed to revitalizing the link between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. It has also provided a tangible framework within which the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions have deepened their cooperation in support of Haiti.

In keeping with its policy of promoting multilateral solutions to conflicts, the Government of Guatemala has reaffirmed its commitment and its willingness to participate in MINUSTAH, established by the Council pursuant to resolution 1542 (2004). In that framework, a contingent of Guatemalan military police officers constitutes our current contribution to MINUSTAH.

Guatemala reaffirms its support for the Stabilization Mission, which is working tirelessly to carry out its mandate to consolidate stability in the country, support the constitutional and political process, help the Transitional Government to hold elections and assist Haitian institutions in ensuring respect for human rights, among other tasks.

Thus, it is important to recognize that a military presence alone cannot ensure the political stabilization of Haiti. It is worrisome that prevailing conditions make it difficult to bring about solid and lasting national reconciliation. Coordination among the regional organizations, agencies, programmes and non-governmental organizations in support of the Transitional Government's establishment of a secure and stable environment is a crucial element for fully taking the most efficient advantage of all the work being carried out on the ground.

Guatemala stresses the importance of the elections scheduled to take place in Haiti at the end of 2005. We believe that they will provide an opportunity to create greater stability for the country's future.

Finally, in connection with that challenge and all the other challenges that Haiti and its people face, my delegation renews its appeal to the international community to provide Haiti with the support and assistance needed to overcome the difficulties of the past and enable the country to advance towards a future that will witness the full realization of the rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Mexico, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Berruga (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to wish all success to Argentina as it begins its mandate on the Security Council and assumes the presidency for the month of January.

The question of Haiti has particular relevance in the foreign policy of Mexico. For that reason, my Government considers this debate, wisely convened by the Argentine presidency, to be a good opportunity to share some of the guiding ideas of our policy on that Caribbean country.

Mexico supports the efforts of the international community, in particular those of our continent, to restore peace and security in Haiti and to reconstruct its democratic institutions. Moreover, we express our firmest support for the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), whose principal civil and military component is of Latin American origin. In particular, Mexico expresses its support for the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of MINUSTAH, Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés.

Mexico agrees with Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the international community's commitments towards Haiti should be of a comprehensive and long-term nature, with the goal of resolving the structural problems that that brotherly country continues to face.

We believe that the priority for 2005 should be to promote political dialogue among all groups of actors in Haiti, without exclusion, with a view to preparing and holding the local and presidential elections, which should be participatory, representative and legitimate.

At the same time, it is necessary to maintain a medium- and long-term plan for the reconstruction of solid institutions for Haitian society, especially in the areas of justice administration and prosecution, human rights, the fight against poverty, the creation of infrastructure and the development of high-quality health, education and other services.

The participation and support of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the resolution of the Haitian crisis are fundamental. For that reason, the initiatives taken in the framework of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, other regional groupings and financial organizations should be coordinated with the Caribbean countries.

In the various forums and mechanisms concerned with the Haitian crisis, Mexico will continue to offer its support, especially in the reconstruction of the country's civilian institutions. As well, we will continue to provide timely humanitarian assistance as we have been doing so far.

Allow me to give a brief account of the actions of cooperation taken by Mexico at the bilateral and regional levels. During 2004, the Government of Mexico sent emergency humanitarian aid to Haiti on four occasions. In April, Mexico responded to the appeal of the interim President, Mr. Boniface Alexandre, and we sent 1,012 tons of aid, in particular food and medicines. On 5 June, Mexico sent 19 tons of food and medicine in response to the crisis caused by the heavy rains that devastated Haitian communities along the border with the Dominican Republic. On 11 and 12 October, the Government of Mexico sent to Haiti two Hercules C-130 aeroplanes of the Mexican air force with 25 tons of aid to alleviate the damage caused by Tropical Storm Jeanne. That assistance included a group of 16 experts, medical material, various kinds of equipment and food. Finally, on 17 November, a Mexican navy ship arrived at Port-au-Prince transporting specialized medical personnel and civilian engineers as well as a helicopter and an ambulance. During its stay, the team of medical specialists carried out many surgical operations and gave medical assistance to more than 1,000 persons.

In the regional context, we note Mexico's cooperation in electoral assistance through the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico. In response to the request of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Electoral Institute is currently providing technical support in the organization, administration and development of the process for the elections to take place in Haiti this year. To that end, from 22 to 27 November, the members of the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council participated in an international workshop in Mexico on electoral administration organized with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and the OAS. Representatives of electoral organizations from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Panama and Venezuela also participated. As well, the Institute has named two Mexican officials to participate in the OAS Special Mission in Haiti. In the second quarter of 2005,

Mexico will make a voluntary contribution of $20,000 to the OAS Special Mission.

In the framework of the last July's donors conference for Haiti organized by the Inter-American Development Bank, Mexico pledged $40,000 worth of cooperation in the technical-scientific and cultural-educational areas; those resources will be used to facilitate the movement of experts and technicians between the two countries. The modalities for cooperation include capacity-building and assessments in areas such as agriculture, drinking water, training in HIV/AIDS prevention and medical attention, diplomatic training, drainage engineering and the production and quality-control of seeds.

At the subregional level, Mexico is exploring various areas of cooperation within the Group of Three, comprising Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia, and within the Rio Group.

Finally, at the bilateral level, last October, Mexican officials, including our Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Latin America and the Caribbean, made a working visit to Haiti to evaluate possible areas of cooperation. The following were identified.

In the area of the reconstruction of highways, Mexico commited itself to study contributing to financing the reconstruction of sections of the highway between Saint-Marc and Gonaïves.

In the area of reforestation, the Secretariat of the Environment of Mexico and the Ministry of Environment of Haiti signed a preliminary agreement on cooperation on two specific projects: the ongoing evaluation of natural resources in the arid ecosystem of north-west Haiti and the administration of La Visite National Park.

In the educational realm, Mexico has offered a package of 40 scholarships for high school students who wish to study in our country beginning in the 2005 school year. Likewise, it has been agreed to create the Gerard Pierre Charles chair at the State University of Haiti in recognition of the work of that distinguished intellectual and politician of Haiti who lived in Mexico for more than 20 years.

To date, those have been Mexico's most relevant contributions to the pacification and stabilization of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Mexico for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Norway, on whom I now call.

Mr. Frydenlund (Norway): Norway welcomes this important opportunity to address the situation in Haiti and would like to use the occasion to express solidarity with Haiti and its population. Further, we would like to express our strong support for the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

The security situation in Haiti continues to be an obstacle to sustained democratic and economic development in the country. Haiti now needs both to restore security and to implement investment and aid in order to lay the foundations for the country's reconstruction and the strengthening of the rule of law. In those efforts, it is essential that the international community confirm its long-term commitment to assisting Haiti. Faced with a difficult situation, we should intensify our efforts rather than turn our attention elsewhere.

There is a strong need to promote and facilitate national reconciliation in an open and inclusive process. Political training is important for national opinion leaders and other social and political actors in order to ensure the continued strengthening of democracy in Haiti.

Over the past six years, Norway has been involved in facilitating political dialogue and consensus-building. It is Norway's view that, by bringing political groups into a dialogue based on democratic values and practices, an environment for democratic development can be established. Norway intends to continue those efforts, in close coordination and cooperation with national and international efforts. Norway also welcomes the joint efforts to prepare for fair and transparent elections to be held in November. Norway fully supports and has made financial contributions to the Organization of American States and its electoral assistance to Haiti.

Norway maintains its commitment to Haiti. We will continue to support the processes of dialogue and reconciliation and will be pleased to coordinate with others in those efforts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Ecuador, on whom I now call.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish at the outset to extend to you, Sir, the most cordial congratulations of the Government and people of Ecuador on Argentina's well-deserved election to the Council. In my capacity as representative of a former non-permanent member of the Council, I express my delegation's gratification at addressing you as President of this United Nations organ.

I also wish to thank my colleague and friend Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés for his briefing and his efforts.

I further wish to thank you, Sir, for convening this very timely open debate so that the international community can understand the magnitude of the problems besetting Haiti and get a clear picture of the crisis affecting that Caribbean nation.

Ecuador fully supports the Haitian democratic institutions and reiterates the appeal made to them and to the political leadership and people of Haiti — issued at the 4917th meeting of the Council in February 2004, almost a year ago — to establish channels for dialogue and democratic understanding that would allow them to resolve their country's ongoing problems peacefully and to achieve a national reconciliation that would strengthen the roots of democracy and bolster the country's efforts to improve political, economic and social conditions with a view to ensuring the prosperity and sustainable development of future generations in a framework of peace, tolerance and national harmony.

While Ecuador is aware of the efforts being deployed in Haiti to stabilize the situation, preserve the legal and political order, protect human rights and prevent a humanitarian crisis, it believes that, in the current circumstances, the international community must make a greater and more decisive contribution to assisting and strengthening the institutions of that country.

However, as my delegation has underscored on other occasions, we fully agree with the statement, made on behalf of the Rio Group in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, that peace cannot last without development, that we must counter the underlying causes of conflict, and that the promotion of development, the rule of law, the establishment of reliable transitional mechanisms of justice, attention to the special needs of women and children in armed conflict, and the success of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are, inter alia, crucial to the consolidation of democratic institutions in post-conflict countries.

Ecuador, a firm defender of the United Nations Charter, believes that we must all commit ourselves to peacebuilding. Aware of its responsibilities as a Member of this Organization to contribute to the best of its abilities to the establishment of peace and security throughout the world, Ecuador has decided to participate in Haiti. On 29 September 2004, we signed a memorandum of understanding to contribute to the United Nations reserve forces in that brotherly Caribbean country by dispatching a company of 66 military engineers and trucks in a joint operation with Chile.

In resolution 1576 (2004) of 29 November 2004, the Security Council underlined that political reconciliation and economic reconstruction efforts remain key to the stability and security of Haiti and urged the Transitional Government to continue to make progress in the implementation of the Interim Cooperation Framework, including by developing concrete projects for economic development, in close cooperation with, and with the full assistance of, the international community, in particular the United Nations and international financial institutions. At the same time, the Council urged the relevant financial institutions and donor countries to disburse promptly the funds pledged at the International Donors Conference on Haiti held in Washington, D.C. on 19 and 20 July 2004.

My delegation therefore stresses the spirit of that resolution and recalls the Security Council's call on the international financial institutions and the donors to disburse without delay the funds pledged in Washington, D.C. We cordially appeal to them resolutely to cooperate to resolve the situation in Haiti in all its aspects.

Ecuador is ready to confront the challenges of stabilizing Haiti and endorses a multidimensional approach to peacekeeping operations. We are prepared to contribute to such operations and to world security under United Nations auspices, but we feel that the international community should demonstrate greater

sensitivity and resolve in facing the threats to democratic institutions, human rights and economic development in Haiti. That is all the more important when we consider that countries with scarce economic resources, like Ecuador and others in the Latin American and Caribbean region, have demonstrated their profound commitment to the success of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti by offering their assistance and contributing military personnel in solidarity and cooperation with the Haitian nation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Paraguay.

Mr. Buffa (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate Minister Rafael Bielsa and the Argentine Republic on their timely initiative of convening an open debate on Haiti during the Argentine presidency of the Security Council this month. It is extremely important for Paraguay to see the willingness of the Security Council to make known and explain topics of overarching interest to all Member States, and in particular matters related to security and institutional stabilization in countries affected by internal conflict.

The establishment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in June 2004 provided the endorsement necessary to guarantee an orderly and transparent transition to institutional and political recovery in the Republic of Haiti, thereby averting destabilizing effects in the region. We would therefore like to congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, Mr. Juan Valdés, for his detailed briefing on the current situation, which pointed to substantive progress towards the normalization of activities in the country.

We are also pleased to note the active joint participation of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations in the electoral process this year, which will be of vital importance. We therefore hope that that process will also have the resolute support of other institutions and States in order to ensure free and transparent elections with the participation of all Haitians.

The human and financial resources mobilized to date for MINUSTAH confirm the willingness of Member States to decisively support multilateral cooperation to overcome the climate of instability and disorder that prevailed during Haiti's political crisis and that caused significant damage and irreparable losses to the Haitian people. Paraguay is taking part in the Stabilization Mission by contributing staff officers. However, for logistical reasons beyond our control, and although our desire remains firm and committed, we have had to postpone to a later stage the deployment of troops to the field.

Paraguay welcomes the active mobilization of a great number of Latin American and Caribbean Member States, which has provided an effective and decisive response to a humanitarian emergency besetting a country of the region. Meanwhile, as we have heard during this open debate, financial contributions are still lagging. We urge donor countries and financial institutions to streamline the process of fulfilling the pledges they made at the donors conference in Washington last year.

Finally, we would like to place on record Paraguay's commitment to continue to support the cause and ideals of the United Nations as it seeks to bring about lasting stability and development for its Member States, in particular for those that have for far too long seen their aspirations thwarted when it comes to providing their citizens with the stability and institutional development necessary to support their legitimate right to achieve sustainable economic and social development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Paraguay for his kind words addressed to my country.

I now call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Rock (Canada): Let me say at the outset how much the Government of Canada appreciates the opportunity to take part in this discussion today. This initiative on the part of the Government of Argentina furnishes us with additional evidence of the sincerity of that Government's commitment to the cause of Haitian reconstruction. The involvement today of so many senior Government representatives from this hemisphere and elsewhere demonstrates the truly international and interregional nature of this cooperative work.

Almost one year has passed now since former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide left Haiti, a country then in a state of turmoil and on the brink of civil war. The efforts of the Council — first by authorizing the deployment of the Multinational Interim Force and,

subsequently, by establishing the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) — have provided important support to the Transitional Government of Haiti and to its efforts to re-establish stability and security, promote reconciliation and relaunch the democratic process. We believe that, under United Nations leadership, a coordinated approach between national actors and regional and international partners will ensure a better future for all Haitians.

We wish to say a word in particular about Juan Gabriel Valdés, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who has worked so effectively and who has won the confidence and respect of all actors with his frankness, his skill and his evident commitment.

Canada would respectfully suggest that Haiti currently faces three fundamental and pressing challenges. The first challenge is to establish and sustain security and implement comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). The second is to ensure economic and social reconstruction. And the third is to promote national reconciliation and relaunch the democratic process in Haiti. While efforts to respond to those three areas must of course be made in parallel, it seems clear that without a secure environment economic and social reconstruction cannot happen, reconciliation will remain but a hope and the democratic process eventually leading to fair and free elections cannot proceed.

Let me first deal briefly with the security challenge. Canada welcomes the efforts of the Transitional Government to begin to address the issue of former members of the Haitian armed forces. That problem continues to have serious implications for the security situation, in particular with regard to the capacity of the Haitian National Police and MINUSTAH to operate effectively in Haiti. Canada welcomes the intent and actions of the Transitional Government of Haiti in tackling that issue, including through its plan to establish a national commission on DDR. But we suggest that it must be addressed as a matter of utmost urgency. We also suggest that the reinsertion of any members of the former armed forces into the Haitian National Police or other security apparatus should involve strict and comprehensive screening and training procedures, to ensure a transparent, accountable and effective process.

Canada will continue to do its part, as evidenced by our current contribution to MINUSTAH, in particular to its civilian police component. In that regard, we particularly welcome the recent joint operations between MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police that have successfully supported the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, public safety and public order in Haiti. Those operations are excellent examples of the type of close coordination that is essential to our collective efforts to create a secure and stable environment. We hope they will continue. However, we would suggest that true security cannot be attained without an end to impunity and without the effective promotion and protection of human rights.

(*spoke in French*)

Canada condemns all violations of human rights. We urge the Transitional Government to ensure that due process is followed and that individuals subject to imprisonment are formally charged in accordance with Haitian law. We welcome the investigation recently launched by MINUSTAH into alleged extrajudicial executions committed by the Haitian National Police. We also urge an immediate end to the unauthorized exercise of law enforcement functions by armed groups.

(*spoke in English*)

Let me turn briefly to the challenge posed by social and economic reconstruction. At the December meeting of the Contact Group, donors identified the slow pace of disbursements as perhaps the most significant problem. We all agreed to look proactively at reducing bottlenecks and at strengthening support for capacity-building in ministries that require assistance. The need to rapidly identify four or five priority projects that can deliver much-needed quick results on the ground is a pressing one. We are working hard with the Transitional Government and our partners to identify solutions.

Since December, the Canadian International Development Agency has provided 16 million Canadian dollars to the Transitional Government of Haiti to assist it in the clearance of arrears to the World Bank. In clearing its arrears, the Transitional Government becomes eligible for new modes of financial support provided by the Bank. In addition, part of the contribution will go towards the construction of the Route de Rail in Port-au-Prince, a

highly visible project, co-funded with the European Commission and implemented in collaboration with MINUSTAH, which will open up a southern exit from Port-au-Prince and create employment in the surrounding area, a disadvantaged neighbourhood of the capital.

Clearly, more must be done quickly to rebuild Haiti, and Canada remains conscious that our commitment must also be sustained over the longer term.

We are pleased to chair the Ad Hoc Advisory Group of the Economic and Social Council that will examine Haiti's development challenges. That committed group, which includes Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Haiti, Spain and Trinidad and Tobago, is working actively with the Transitional Government, with MINUSTAH, with international financial institutions and with the Special Representative to identify obstacles to development. We have already identified areas such as capacity-building, sustainable funding for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the involvement of the Haitian diaspora as requiring particular attention. The Group welcomes the opportunity to work with the Security Council in addressing the situation in Haiti, and to that end hopes that a joint mission to Haiti can soon be organized.

Prime Minister Martin, speaking both in Haiti and at the Montreal Conference on the Haitian Diaspora in December, encouraged all Haitians to renounce violence and participate in a genuine and broad-based national reconciliation process. He also promised Canadian support for the re-establishment of democracy through free and fair elections. We are pleased to note that this week, Canada committed to providing $17 million in support of Haiti's electoral processes, to assist the Provisional Electoral Council in fulfilling its mandate. But successful elections require not only that technical conditions be met, but also that an appropriate political context be developed. That context can be created only through an open and forthright national dialogue among all sectors of Haitian society and the main political parties, including Fanmi Lavalas.

We consider that a national dialogue is of fundamental importance in mobilizing all Haitians for the restoration of democratic order and the reconstruction and sustainable development of the country. We welcome Prime Minister Latortue's recent commitments to do what it takes to launch this process. We urge all political actors to renounce violence and to take part fully.

Canada has committed more than $180 million over two years for the reconstruction of Haiti. We understand that the task is formidable, that it will be costly. But the international community cannot again afford to fail the Haitian people. Canada wants to help build a stable, democratic and prosperous society in Haiti. We stand ready to continue to work with the Transitional Government, the United Nations and our other international partners towards this end.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Morocco, on whom I now call.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. You are well known for your great diplomatic experience and commitment to peace in your continent, and specifically in the Caribbean region and Haiti. We are convinced that, under the outstanding leadership of Ambassador César Mayoral, the Argentine team will discharge its responsibilities to the fullest. Indeed, it has already begun to do so, to the satisfaction of all.

I should also like to congratulate all of the new Council members and to pay tribute to the very positive and fruitful work of the Algerian presidency during the month of December.

I welcome your initiative, Mr. President, to convene this public debate on the situation in Haiti. This is an issue to which the Kingdom of Morocco attaches the greatest importance, given our long-standing relations of cooperation with that friendly country, to whose security and stability we are firmly committed, and our desire — which you share, Sir — for the harmonious development of the Caribbean region.

Before dealing with the situation in Haiti, I should like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and his Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés — a good friend who was the representative of his country, Chile, here at the United Nations — for their tireless efforts and their dedication to the restoration of peace and

security and to strengthening the political process in Haiti.

We should also like to commend the efforts of the Multinational Interim Force in Haiti, which was made up of contingents from Canada, France and the United States and which carried out its responsibilities with great professionalism.

Haiti has given French-speaking countries, and the entire world, many eminent artists and poets. It is a country with great cultural vitality. But it is also a country that has, unfortunately, been the victim of confrontations and cycles of violence that have torn it apart, depriving it of the means to provide for the basic needs of its people and to address the challenges of sustainable development — a situation has been made worse by natural disasters.

In April, our Organization launched an appeal to Member countries to support the political transition by contributing to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which was established pursuant to resolution 1529 (2004). The Kingdom of Morocco had no hesitation in responding positively to that appeal. Indeed, in July we decided that, working in close cooperation with the Kingdom of Spain, a neighbouring country that is also committed to the stability and security of the Caribbean region, we would participate in MINUSTAH by providing an operational military contingent.

For Morocco, this is a matter of working to ensure the success of the United Nations Mission with a view to meeting all conditions for the normal resumption of the constitutional process in Haiti and the full functioning of the governmental authorities, within the framework of the rule of law.

We sincerely hope that security conditions will quickly be restored so that the Transitional Government can hold elections this year. The Moroccan contingent has been operational since November, and it is fully carrying out its responsibilities within MINUSTAH. Similarly, Moroccan and Spanish troops have been cooperating very successfully since taking over from the Chilean battalion at Fort Liberté and Terre Rouge in the north-east of Haiti. They now control the main crossing points on the border with the Dominican Republic and are working to stem smuggling and arms trafficking.

We are pleased that the many contributions to MINUSTAH have enabled it almost to reach full strength, as authorized by the Security Council, and to deploy throughout the country, thus ensuring that it has a permanent presence. Here, we would like to pay tribute to the effective and well-respected command that is being exercised by Brazil with great competence. The latest report of the Secretary-General on MINUSTAH, dated 18 November 2004, outlines the key tracks for moving forward in our thinking and in the efforts undertaken so that the Organization can lead the transitional process under way in Haiti to a successful conclusion.

We earnestly hope that the Transitional Government — with MINUSTAH's help, of course — will pursue without delay its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, which should lead to the creation of the national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration recommended by the Secretary-General. The disarmament of armed groups is, in our view, the sine qua non for restoring stability on the island and for the success of the transitional process. Disarming militias will not only help to establish an appropriate environment for the forthcoming elections, but will also undoubtedly help promote the restoration of the rule of law on the island.

If re-establishing security is a necessary condition for the transitional process and for peace-building, we remain convinced that that process, if it is to have lasting success, must be accompanied by an in-depth political reform in which all actors commit to dialogue and cooperation aimed at organizing transparent and fair elections. It goes without saying that accomplishing those objectives is also largely a function of the degree and level of international assistance in the military, humanitarian, economic and political areas.

We welcome the fact that the financial institutions and donor countries responded to the Security Council appeal, in accordance with resolution 1576 (2004), which permitted significant disbursement of the funds pledged at the international donor conference on Haiti held in Washington on 19 and 20 July 2004. We hope that that financial support will continue, because the normalization of the situation in Haiti will largely depend on it. There is a link between purely military action and economic action aimed at meeting the people's basic needs.

As this new year begins, we express the hope that the Transitional Government and all the parties concerned will move towards peace, with MINUSTAH's help, within the framework of the mandate set by the Security Council. We are convinced that political harmony, once restored, will lead all Haitians to mobilize for the development and prosperity of their country.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to express to you, Mr. President, the satisfaction of the Cuban delegation at your presence at today's Security Council meeting and to join all those who have congratulated the Argentine Republic on assuming the Council presidency for this month.

Haiti, cradle of the liberation struggles against colonialism in America and the first independent black republic in the Western Hemisphere, is today a country passed by and forgotten by the international community. It suffers because of its poverty; it endures chronic and structural underdevelopment; and it is submerged in violence and the permanent political crises not unfamiliar to foreign interests and the continued interventionism that has characterized its turbulent republican history. It is crumbling because of the devastating effects of successive natural disasters and the ecological damage to its deteriorated environment. The year 2004 was particularly tragic for the brotherly Haitian people.

Cuba, which feels united in its history and culture with the destiny of the Haitian people, continues to observe the developments in Haiti attentively and with concern. Our country, which has made supportive and unconditional cooperation a pillar of its relations with the Haitian people, believes that a massive contribution of financial and human resources to the economic and social rehabilitation and national reconciliation of that brotherly people is an inescapable duty of the international community.

Haiti is undoubtedly one of the clearest examples of the disastrous consequences of the current international order for underdeveloped countries, particularly in the case of a country that has had to endure more than 200 years of the most flagrant colonialism, exploitation and intervention.

My country supports all the efforts of the Haitian people to overcome existing tensions and to move forward a process of dialogue and national reconciliation, as well as the efforts of the Caribbean Community to find a peaceful and just solution to the Haitian situation. Such a solution will be possible only with the promotion of the economic and social development of the country and the development of its human resources and infrastructure. It is essential that the international community and international institutions increase their contributions and their permanent commitment to this Caribbean country. We hope that the United Nations and the international community as a whole will unite their efforts to attain that objective and that the pledges made at the international donor conference will materialize.

The members of the Council also must work to guarantee that we attain that objective. To focus exclusively on the so-called security problems in Haiti, without considering the fact that only development and progress will lead to peace and stability in that suffering Caribbean nation, would be a short-sighted and unrealistic view that would soon lead to failure. It is only through solidarity that the international community's duty and commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Haiti will fully materialize.

The uninterrupted cooperation that Cuba has maintained with Haiti for years shows how much can be achieved for that country through cooperation and development assistance. Cuba is cooperating with Haiti in various sectors, placing top priority on the health care sector. In more than five years of medical cooperation, 1,909 Cuban health care specialists have worked in Haiti. Their work has made it possible to hold nearly 6 million consultations. They have administered 756,000 vaccinations, assisted with 52,000 births and performed 75,000 surgical interventions. All those actions have enabled us to save more than 120,000 human lives.

Despite the critical situation in that country, Cuban volunteers, resolutely adhering to the principle of non-interference in Haitian internal affairs, have remained at their posts. Our medical brigade in particular, composed of 492 health-care workers and posted throughout the country's 10 departments, has been an example of disinterested co-operation, saving lives in the most difficult conditions.

Cuban cooperation with Haiti goes beyond direct medical assistance. It includes continuous training aimed at capacity-building in the short and medium term. More than 3,000 persons have participated in those programmes, and today there 889 Haitian students in Cuba, 606 of whom are attending our Latin American School of Medicine.

We wish to reiterate once again the firm resolve of the people and the Government of Cuba to continue to contribute, with all the means at our disposal, to achieving a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the situation in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Cuba for the kind words he addressed to my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Uruguay, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay, which is among the 10 main troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions, responded promptly to the appeal for personnel for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) by dispatching approximately 600 military and police personnel, who were among the first to be deployed. Uruguay is now the third-largest troop contributor to the Mission.

Our Government recently decided to increase the size of its military contingent in Haiti. The authorization to deploy an additional 200 troops was given a few days ago by the Uruguayan Parliament, and the new contingent is expected to arrive in Haiti by early February.

Uruguay is thus joining in the efforts of the United Nations in Haiti, not to impose solutions to the political problems that beset that tormented country, but, rather, to help its people and their authorities find their own solutions.

The Transitional Government bears the primary responsibility for leading the country towards the establishment and consolidation of a State based on the rule of law and on the functioning of democratic institutions. That can be achieved only if such leadership is exercised in accordance with democratic principles, ensuring strict respect for human rights. We would recall here the appeal made by the Security Council in its resolutions 1542 (2004) and 1576 (2004), particularly as regards the release of individuals detained for exclusively political reasons and against whom no charges have been brought, and the need for all necessary measures to be taken to prevent impunity for violations of human rights.

The recent agreement signed between the Stabilization Mission and the Haitian Government for general elections this year, as well as the pledges made by Canada, the European Union and the United States to finance those elections, represent very good news and are clear evidence that the stabilization process is under way.

We must also expedite the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and, accordingly, we hope that the Transitional Government will finalize its elaboration of the legal framework governing that process. Long-term development programmes must also be elaborated and implemented.

However, we believe that, given the deplorable economic and social conditions facing the majority of the Haitian population, priority must be given to short-term programmes designed immediately to satisfy the basic needs of Haitians such as food, housing and essential services.

At this stage, efforts should focus on alleviating the extreme poverty that affects the Haitian population. We must recall that Haiti ranks 153rd in the Human Development Index. Haiti is a country with a per-capital gross national product of $415, whose inhabitants lack the basic resources necessary for survival with a minimum of dignity. Under such circumstances, the normalization of the political and security situation appears to be, if not a mission impossible, at the very least an extremely difficult undertaking — unless there is a substantial improvement in the socio-economic framework within which the international community is providing assistance.

If the MINUSTAH presence is accompanied by material assistance that brings about even a slight improvement in living conditions, that will increase the population's confidence in the Mission and its willingness to cooperate, which will facilitate the reconciliation, disarmament and demobilization processes. That is why we consider it very important to provide MINUSTAH with the capacity it needs to rapidly implement short-term projects that have an immediate and tangible impact on the population, as

proposed by the Secretary-General in his most recent report on the Stabilization Mission.

I wish to express our satisfaction at the decision of the Economic and Social Council to reactivate its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, and we hope that its work will help to promote the country's recovery. The Advisory Group must coordinate its work with the Core Group established by the Security Council in paragraph 5 of its resolution 1542 (2004) in order to avoid any overlap.

The task of restoring order and security in Haiti and of creating conditions conducive to its development is of tremendous scope and will require considerable human and financial resources as well as perseverance and dedication on the part of all the individuals and institutions involved in the effort. We are certain that, led by Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés — whom we thank for his report this morning — this effort will ultimately be successful.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Bolivia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Quiroga (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to welcome your presence at this meeting and that of the ministers of Brazil, Chile, Guyana, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

I should like to congratulate the Argentine Republic and you personally, Sir, for having taken the initiative of convening this open debate of the Security Council, which, as has been the case on other occasions, will without a doubt contribute to a greater understanding of the situation in Haiti and increase the international community's awareness of the priority importance that the Latin American and Caribbean region attaches to the consolidation of the process of strengthening Haiti's institutions and the rule of law there.

We are concerned that this sister Caribbean republic has not yet been able to overcome the recurrent crises afflicting it, which are characterized by complex political, social, humanitarian, economic, financial and security problems which have kept the greater part of its population outside the development process.

Despite the efforts made since 1988 by the OAS and the United Nations, it has not been possible to uphold the principle of democratic legitimacy in Haiti for more than short periods of time.

Given the lessons learned from the United Nations stabilization Mission in Haiti in 1994, and in view of the gravity and urgency of the situation, the Bolivian delegation last year supported resolution 1529 (2004), which, at the request of the Interim Government of Haiti, authorized the deployment on the territory of that country of a Multinational Force and requested the Secretary-General to begin preparations for a stabilization force — MINUSTAH — which was concretized by resolution 1542 (2004) under Chapter VII.

We note with regret the deterioration of the security situation and the increasingly tense political climate referred to in last November's report of the Secretary-General (S/2004/908), and we encourage the Transitional Government to continue to pursue measures aimed at restoring the democratic process, full respect for human rights and the rule of law in the Republic of Haiti.

The report of the Secretary-General describes the progress achieved in the deployment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the activities of its various contingents, including those of the nine Latin American countries that contributed officials, military troops, civil police and formed police units.

We note with satisfaction that the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations have been implemented in a positive manner, through the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) on electoral assistance in Haiti and through the contacts established with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to assess the electoral assistance that its members would contribute to support the reconciliation and recovery efforts of the people of Haiti.

I wish to express our thanks to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, for his briefing and to Mr. Luigi Einaudi, Acting Secretary General of the OAS, for his valuable information and views. I also underline the highly illuminating information the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund has shared with the Council.

With respect to humanitarian action, we agree with the report that is important that MINUSTAH demonstrate its effectiveness through actions having tangible benefits for the population. That is a particularly sensitive matter for the small island developing States most vulnerable to natural disasters, as has been tragically demonstrated.

Moreover, security — the indispensable requirement for safeguarding the political transition process leading to a participatory democracy inclusive of all segments of society — is undoubtedly one of the most important challenges for MINUSTAH in its work to support the Transitional Government: it involves not only restoring the population's confidence but also implementing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti testifies to the commitment of the international community, in particular of our entire region, to the people of Haiti. Ensuring MINUSTAH's success is a challenge and inescapable responsibility for the Latin American and Caribbean countries in the task of maintaining a genuine zone of peace and development in our region.

We reaffirm Bolivia's support for Haiti in its efforts, and we call upon the entire international community to continue to extend its decisive and long-term cooperation, which will enable MINUSTAH to fully carry out its mandate.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Honduras, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Suazo (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour to address the Council under your able leadership, Mr. Minister. We thank in particular the delegation of Argentina for its wise decision to convene this public meeting of the Council on the situation in Haiti, a brotherly country with which Honduras maintains excellent relations of friendship and cooperation. Since the creation of the United Nations we and Haiti have sat side by side, as we do at this table.

We welcome the interest — heightened by you, Sir — which has led to the participation of the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Chile, Barbados and the Dominican Republic; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés; and the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Mr. Luigi Einaudi. We welcome with particular optimism the message delivered to the Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti.

The participation of the United Nations and the Organization of American States in Haiti prior to the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), in 1993, and the subsequent missions leading to today's United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), cause us to recall our participation in the Council's debates on the need to restore democratic and constitutional order in that brotherly country. In those debates, Argentina and Honduras, which were members of the Council at the time, were filled with optimism and hope. A decade later, in January 2005, we understand how difficult it can be to achieve some objectives, no matter how simple they may seem.

At that time, Honduras introduced the question of the humanitarian situation in Haiti in the General Assembly. It was duly followed up until the item was biennialized and then practically forgotten. The two times the General Assembly considered the item, there was neither a resolution nor a debate on the humanitarian situation in Haiti. The international community shares the blame.

The passing of a decade and the repetitious nature of the situation today would seem discouraging. However, it is preferable to underline the positive elements and state that we will not forget the people of Haiti. We will continue to seek the best formula to remedy their problems and help them to achieve political and socio-economic recovery. The Millennium Development Goals are the same for all, but not all have the same resources and means to achieve them. For that reason, the convening of this meeting leads us to envision a new opportunity and renewed hope for Haiti.

The report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2004/908) unambiguously states that

> "Haitians will vote in local elections on 6 November 2005. On 27 November 2005, the first round of national elections (presidential and legislative) will be held, with the option of a second round of voting '— if necessary, according to our understanding —' on 18 December 2005". (*para. 29*)

The report adds that

> "The memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) concerning electoral assistance to Haiti was signed on 2 and 3 November 2004". (*para. 31*)

The political landscape seems to be becoming clearer, and we hope that the timetable can be adhered to without setbacks.

With respect to humanitarian problems, the situation is very different. In that regard, we make a special appeal to the international community in connection with the fragility of the environment and the need for international assistance to continue, as *The New York Times* recently put it, beyond the period that the media keeps the crisis situation on the front page. The international community must not forget its long-term commitments when the situation is no longer news or, in particular, when faced with the constraints that always arise when such commitments are carried out.

The report of the Secretary-General is clear on the devastation and the destruction of the environment caused by the recent floods in Haiti, but today that is no longer news. Tragically, another, unprecedented natural disaster has struck brotherly countries of the Asia Pacific region — and we express our solidarity to those countries. It has led us quickly to forget the more than 2,000 dead and the 30,000 others affected in Haiti.

Haiti is also seriously afflicted by pandemics such as HIV/AIDS. An additional effort could be made in the area of cooperation to reinforce health-care programmes in the country. We make an appeal to the international community in that regard.

Haiti has a special place in the history of the international community, in particular of Latin America. It was among the first of the discovered lands. It achieved independence in 1804, and in 1816 it gave refuge and unreserved support to the liberator of America, Simón Bolívar. Thus, we owe a debt to that brotherly republic. Honduras expresses its solidarity in these difficult times and raises its voice so that the Haitian people will not be forgotten again.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of El Salvador, to whom I give the floor.

Ms. Gallardo (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to voice the satisfaction of the Government of El Salvador at your initiative to convene an open Security Council debate on the situation in Haiti. We take this opportunity also to express our confidence in the diplomatic leadership of Argentina in guiding the affairs of the Council.

My Government attaches great importance to this topic, not only because of its implications for regional peace and security, but also because of the human tragedy and the pressing needs of Haitian civil society at present. The social harmony to which it aspires requires progress towards the creation and subsequent consolidation of democratic institutions that can improve living conditions and strengthen the rule of law.

This debate provides an opportunity to reiterate El Salvador's political will to continue contributing, within our limited possibilities, to the stabilization process that the international community and the Transitional Government are carrying out in Haiti. This process is taking place in the context of the international community's action, in the global, multilateral context of the United Nations, through the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), as well as in the regional context, through the Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Rio Group. It must continue to be consolidated.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General on his endeavours and leadership in this process.

El Salvador shares the concern of the Transitional Government of Haiti about the deteriorating security situation, particularly in Port-au-Prince, and the resulting tense political climate. The existence of armed groups, and the intention of some of them to confront the Transitional Government, continues to be among the main threats to peace and security in Haiti. My delegation hopes that the Transitional Government's proposed measures will contribute to reducing levels of violence and will promote a political climate conducive to tolerance, dialogue and negotiation. As the Council is aware, the Government of El Salvador is convinced that those are the required tools to seek and consolidate the peace. Our own history has proven that.

The coordination efforts of MINUSTAH and the National Police in Port-au-Prince, intended to restore the population's trust in the capabilities of the Haitian National Police, have proven to be an effective practice in making progress. In that context, it is important to make a greater effort to strengthen the national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. We must recall that in the process of peacebuilding in El Salvador, that was an essential step to which the international community attached a great deal of importance.

As to the civilian police component of MINUSTAH, at the request of the United Nations, the Government of El Salvador is considering the possibility of making available more police officers, particularly women, to be included in the overall international effort, and in conjunction with other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Government of El Salvador is convinced that stabilization and peacebuilding in Haiti must be based on promoting dialogue and national reconciliation. In that regard, we are gratified at the positive assessment provided by Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as a result of his exploratory meetings with political leaders and representatives of civil society, who have stated their readiness for a national dialogue.

The Transitional Government's commitment to organize free, fair and legitimate elections in 2005 and to hand over power to a president to be elected on 7 February 2006 is another key element that can contribute effectively to the success of dialogue and national reconciliation. Here, El Salvador's experience might be useful to Haiti, and we shall place it at their disposal under any agreed modalities and format. In this context, my delegation is gratified at the signing on 3 November 2004 of the memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the Organization of American States on electoral assistance for Haiti. It sets out respective responsibilities and establishes a committee for electoral cooperation to ensure that the assistance provided will be effective and consistent.

In addition to the gravity of the political situation, it is important for us to recognize the negative impact of natural disasters, in particular the flooding that occurred in southern Haiti in May 2004, as well as the torrential rains in the wake of Tropical Storm Jeanne in September of the same year. Undeniably, the need to respond immediately to the disaster was a further challenge for MINUSTAH, which had to temporarily redeploy its military and police personnel to Gonaïves to support the Argentine troops in providing security at distribution points and warehouses, and for humanitarian convoys. In my delegation's opinion, the international community's response was excellent and effective. However, Haiti's manifest vulnerability to natural disasters, along with other pending development tasks, are a double challenge for the national authorities and the international community. We must not forget that political stabilization must go hand in hand with strengthening national capacity to confront both challenges simultaneously.

In this respect, the Government of El Salvador endorses the commitment of the Rio Group to coordinate with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and donor countries to ensure prompt disbursement of the funds and resources pledged for stabilization in Haiti. We also are pleased with the decision adopted by the Economic and Social Council to reactivate its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

In conclusion, I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction with the actions adopted by the Security Council with respect to the proposals made in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2004/908, and in particular the extension of MINUSTAH's mandate for an additional 18-month period, until 31 May 2006. El Salvador is convinced that the engagement of the United Nations at this stage of the stabilization process in Haiti is fundamental for successful and lasting national reconciliation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés to respond to comments and questions offered in the course of the meeting.

Mr. Valdés (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), I would like to speak briefly to thank all speakers for their statements; they have been most helpful in enriching our vision of the determination of the Security Council and the international community with respect to our task in Haiti. I would like especially to thank everyone for the

very generous — and undeserved — words addressed to me personally. I shall take them as an expression of trust in the United Nations Mission, in the soldiers and the police officers who are helping support the restoration of security in Haiti, and in the United Nations officials who, on a daily basis, provide support to Haitian society in so many different areas to bring about development and reconciliation.

Throughout today's statements, I could note that delegations spoke of the priority that MINUSTAH attaches — and must attach — to the disarmament of all illegal groups within Haitian society that continue to possess weapons. I noted also that delegations underscored the need for Haitians to begin a process of national dialogue and reconciliation, as well as the need for the United Nations Mission to provide Haitian society with technical and political support to ensure that the dialogue yields positive results for the elections that will take place this year and for the improved governance that will be required to establish a democratic, legitimate Government in early 2006.

I have already had an opportunity to tell you, my dear friend Rafael Bielsa, how much I value this meeting, as well as Argentina's decision to convene this open Security Council debate to discuss the situation in Haiti. This meeting is being held at a time when the United Nations Mission, with the support of the Transitional Government of Haiti and the growing participation of Haitian society, has effectively halted the disintegration of that society and its spiral towards the abyss. We now need to climb back up the slope. To do so we need to promote a process of reconciliation and dialogue among Haitians, strengthen institutions, fine tune the work of the police and, as has often been said at this meeting, maintain the international community's economic support for projects that will have a positive impact on the quality of life of the Haitian people in the coming months and throughout the year. This meeting once again confirms that the main contribution of the Organization in support of developing countries experiencing internal disintegration depends on ongoing work and support and on the ability to reassure such countries that they themselves have the capacity to extricate themselves from their predicament, given that there is international support for them.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Special Representative for his clear comments and for his kind words addressed to me.

Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council reaffirms the comprehensive mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) as set forth in resolutions 1542 (2004) and 1576 (2004), and expresses its support for the United Nations presence in Haiti as long as necessary.

"The Security Council underlines that national reconciliation, security and economic development remain key to stability in Haiti, and, in that regard, stresses that all Member States and international organizations, especially those in the region, should support the Transitional Government of Haiti in those efforts.

"The Security Council underlines the important role of MINUSTAH in ensuring a secure environment and commends the recent joint operations by MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police (HNP), in particular against all illegal armed groups. It notes however that further urgent action is needed to continue to improve the security situation. The Council again calls on all parties in Haiti to respect human rights and to renounce the use of violence to advance their goals.

"The Security Council encourages the Transitional Government to create without delay the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), to address all armed groups, particularly former members of the military, in a comprehensive manner. It notes that any compensation should be part of a comprehensive and durable solution.

"The Security Council renews its appeal for the prompt disbursement of the funds pledged by international financial institutions and donor countries at the International Donors Conference on Haiti held in July 2004. It recognizes the need for MINUSTAH, other organs of the United Nations system, international financial institutions and Member States to assist the Transitional Government in the preparation and implementation of development projects in Haiti, as well as quick-impact projects. The Council reiterates the need to assist the Transitional Government in establishing a long-term

development strategy for Haiti, in accordance with the priorities set forth in the Interim Cooperation Framework.

"The Security Council welcomes recent steps taken by the Transitional Government of Haiti to release some individuals being held without formal charge or trial, and calls on the Transitional Government to review all such cases in order to ensure full respect for due process and the rule of law. In this regard, the Council calls on MINUSTAH to continue its support for the provision of human rights training to Haitian judicial, police and correctional authorities to ensure adherence to international norms and standards.

"The Security Council encourages the Transitional Government to continue to take steps towards a comprehensive and inclusive national dialogue and reconciliation process and calls upon all political actors in Haiti to renounce violence and join this dialogue without delay. The Council fully supports MINUSTAH's continuing facilitation of this process.

"The Security Council calls upon the Transitional Government, with the assistance of MINUSTAH and the Organization of American States (OAS), to take urgently the necessary measures to ensure the holding of free and fair elections in 2005 and the subsequent transfer of power to elected authorities, and welcomes the recent decisions of the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) in its preparations. It encourages all political parties that have rejected violence to participate in the electoral process.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to organize a mission to Haiti before 1 June 2005, possibly in conjunction with a mission of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

"The Security Council expresses its gratitude to the countries that have contributed personnel to the Mission. It urges troop — and police-contributing countries to complete the authorized strength of MINUSTAH as soon as possible, stressing that prompt completion of this step is an essential requirement for the continuing success of the operation.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Juan Gabriel Valdés, and commends the work done by MINUSTAH and all of its personnel."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2005/1.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti has asked to speak. If no member of the Council objects, I propose to give him the floor.

I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti.

Mr. Siméon (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): As this meeting of the Council draws to a close, I should like very briefly to again thank the brotherly country of Argentina for having organized this special debate, and to convey to you, Mr. President, my friend Rafael Bielsa, heartfelt congratulations for the skill with which you have conducted the proceedings.

I should also like to thank all those who responded to his appeal today. The level at which they participated demonstrates the level of solidarity that they feel with my country. I would like to thank them for their acts of solidarity and for the understanding that they have shown of our problems, which has been apparent from all of their statements. I would also like to thank them for having sincerely voiced their concerns and offered their advice. I promise that that I will report back to my Government and, through the media, to my people and to the social and professional organizations in my country. I would also like to say that, with their support, we will move forward in the future — I know that their support will always be friendly and based on feelings of solidarity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I cannot conclude without thanking the Secretariat, whose staff members tirelessly provided water and other essential logistical support, as well as the interpreters, without whom the Security Council would be a Tower of Babel.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.